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Chairman: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 110: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/56/3*, A/56/83, A/56/151*, A/56/155, A/56/222, A/56/380, A/56/402-E/2001/105 and A/56/403)

Agenda item 111: International drug control (*continued*) (A/56/3*, A/56/83, A/56/157, A/56/222 and A/56/468*)

1. **Mr. Gopinathan** (India) said that acts of terrorism, whether indiscriminate or directed against certain groups, were crimes unlike any other, because the perpetrators challenged the fundamental values of civilization. They were not seeking profit, but to undermine Governments and destroy national political, social and economic structures. As the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, had said, acts of terrorism, such as those carried out at the World Trade Centre, violated the most fundamental human right, the right to life. Terrorism had many consequences, because the World Bank had forecast that the attack of 11 September would lead to a rise in poverty that would claim tens of thousand of lives in the developing world.

2. That was why it was so inadequate that the United Nations Secretariat saw the fight against terrorism only as a subset of its work on crime prevention. There were, of course, obvious synergies between international terrorism and transnational organized crime networks that were involved, in particular, in trafficking in drugs and arms, diamonds and other precious commodities, and in persons, in particular women and children, and also in money-laundering. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had an important role to play in coordinating the action of the international community in support of the measures taken by countries to investigate acts of terrorism which were crimes under both domestic and international law, and to bring the perpetrators to justice as rapidly as possible.

3. For that reason, at the tenth session of the Commission, held in Vienna in May, his delegation had been distressed by the reluctance of many countries to adopt the proposed draft plans of action, particularly on terrorism, because, at the time, they considered themselves to be immune from the problem. The diluted versions of those plans which had been adopted at the resumed session of the Commission in September, left much to be desired. It was to be hoped that countries would now be prepared to adopt a more forceful plan of action and to provide it with adequate resources. Indeed, the perception of the threat of terrorism had changed. In its resolution 1269 (1999), its first resolution on terrorism, the Security Council had implied that only some acts of terrorism were threats, namely those that threatened international peace and security; while in its resolution 1373 (2001), adopted in September 2001, it had affirmed that all acts of terrorism threatened international peace and security. As such, they should be combated by the United Nations system. To that end, it was necessary to increase the resources and reinforce the staff of the United Nations Terrorism Prevention Branch in Vienna, which were absurdly insufficient when it was considered that the two special tribunals established after the conflicts in the Balkans and Rwanda, which had also threatened international peace and security, would cost Member States about $400 million in 2001, or about one sixth of the regular budget of the United Nations.

4. In the area of the fight against drugs, results had not lived up to the expectations of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), yet it had reduced its presence in South Asia, a region which was particularly at risk for drug trafficking. Indeed, far from being the result of the Taliban's concern to comply with the wishes of the international community, the decline in the poppy harvest was related to the drought and to the glut of opium on the market, which the Taliban intended to turn to their advantage by releasing on the market the stocks in their possession, estimated at the average annual production of Afghanistan, once the price of heroin had increased.

5. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, the work of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on capacity-building and technical cooperation for the implementation of the Convention, and the progress made in the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century (A/RES/55/59). His delegation was also pleased that, at is fifty-fifth session, the General Assembly had requested that an

* To be issued.

intergovernmental open-ended expert group should prepare draft terms of reference for the negotiation of an international legal instrument against corruption, which, it was to be hoped, would lead to greater transparency in money transfers and to the repatriation of such funds to the countries of origin.

6. **Mr. Vixay** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on agenda item 111, said that his country was aware that drug abuse and trafficking were a threat to all States and all peoples. His Government had therefore convened a national conference on drug control and was working actively to eliminate opium poppy cultivation by 2006. It was hoped that increased incomes from alternative activities, which his Government was seeking to promote rapidly in the major opium-producing districts, as well as improved market access for the products of those activities and community-based drug-demand reduction would lead to reduced drug dependency. It was also necessary to improve public awareness of the illicit nature of opium cultivation, particularly through law-enforcement measures. A decree on the elimination of opium poppy cultivation and the prohibition of drug trafficking had been promulgated, and a five-year education programme had been adopted in order to prevent drug abuse and trafficking in schools. Increased penalties for drug traffickers and those who committed drug-related crimes were being planned. Thanks to those measures, the areas under opium poppy cultivation had been reduced by 30 per cent since 1998, mostly in areas benefiting from alternative-development projects.

7. Owing to its geographical location, the Lao People's Democratic Republic was used as a country of transit for those trafficking in drugs and precursors. It had therefore strengthened its cooperation with the countries of the region in order to improve the control of drugs and chemical precursors across shared borders, by means of bilateral agreements and a regional memorandum of understanding concluded in 1993. The country was also updating its current legislation in order to become a party to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Taking account of its particular drug-related responsibilities as a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), it was committed to working together with the other States members of that body and with China to free the region of the scourge of drugs and particularly of amphetamine-type stimulants.

8. **Mr.** Talal **Al-Mutairi** (Kuwait), speaking on agenda item 111, said that the worldwide drug problem threatened the very existence of human communities and therefore required international mobilization. His delegation welcomed the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly devoted to countering the world drug problem together" (A/56/157), which described worldwide efforts to reduce demand but also to help producer countries to eliminate the cultivation of illicit drug crops, particularly by proposing alternative activities.

9. Kuwait had long been struggling against the drug problem and its position had evolved over the years. A law promulgated in 1960 had provided for the imprisonment of drug addicts and those who promoted drug addiction. Almost 30 years later, in 1987, another law had come into force, penalizing the drug trade but considering that drug addiction was an illness and emphasizing the rehabilitation of addicts.

10. In 1989 Kuwait had signed the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and had enacted a third law setting up a national anti-drug committee. The latter had set up programmes for the prevention and treatment of drug addiction, focused not only on the health aspects but also on the social and educational dimensions of that scourge. Recently, a broad campaign to promote awareness and mobilize public opinion had been launched with the cooperation of personalities from the literary, artistic and sporting communities.

11. **Mr. Fadaifard** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly emphasized the importance of a coordinated and balanced approach to reduce drug abuse, eliminate illicit supply and counter drug trafficking. That Declaration reflected the determination of the international community in the face of the drug scourge. His delegation also welcomed the new United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which complemented the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

12. It was a matter of deep concern to his delegation that, following two decades of war, the population of Afghanistan had fallen prey to organized crime and had

no alternative to drug-crop cultivation in order to survive. The falling price of opium in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the powerlessness of the Taliban to deal with poppy cultivation, the extreme poverty of farmers and the evacuation of the United Nations from Afghanistan had led to a new wave of cultivation of and trafficking in illicit drugs over the past month. It was therefore important to set up a responsible, broad-based and durable Government in Afghanistan, with the necessary financial resources to restore stability to an economy which was excessively dependent on organized crime.

13. For 20 years, his Government, too, had been involved in a costly war against the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs. The drug problem had brought into being a vast transnational network in the region which also trafficked in arms and persons and supported terrorist activities. That situation was a source of insecurity in the country's eastern provinces, particularly in Khorassan, where there were many cases of hostage-taking.

14. The Islamic Republic of Iran was currently home to 2.5 million Afghan refugees, some of whom were involved in drug trafficking. In 2001, in addition to the allocation of $200 million to tackle the drug problem throughout the country, it had been necessary to allocate $30 million to strengthen border controls, for which 30,000 police officers had already been mobilized.

15. His Government attached great importance to cooperation with international and regional agencies, and had signed memorandums of understanding with a number of countries for the creation of joint committees, the exchange of information and the holding of training courses for law-enforcement officers in the area of drugs. His Government welcomed the conclusion within the framework of the "6 + 2 Group" of a regional action plan as a means of tackling the drugs problem associated with Afghanistan. By adopting the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the international community had shown its determination; it should now also demonstrate the ability to innovate by adopting an approach which would share rights and responsibilities equitably among individuals, local communities, Governments and the international community.

16. The struggle against the worldwide problem of drugs should be accompanied by measures to deter corruption, which was taking on increasingly alarming proportions as a result of globalization, which facilitated the illegal transfer of funds and was particularly damaging to the developing countries, its first victims. In the light of the inseparable linkages between corruption, money-laundering, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, it would be logical that the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime should be followed by an attack upon corruption in the form of negotiations for the adoption of a convention which would serve as an instrument and framework for the international struggle against corruption.

17. **Mr. Emmanuel** (Haiti) said that his delegation supported the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

18. Owing to its geographical location and its precarious economic and social situation, Haiti was vulnerable in the face of drug trafficking, money-laundering and related crimes, which obstructed its economic development. His Government had therefore concluded with the United States of America an agreement to combat drug trafficking by sea and had enacted laws providing for the extradition of offenders and seizure of their assets. Haiti had also set up a financial-intelligence unit with responsibility for examining suspect bank accounts, and a national anti-drug commission. A draft law had been introduced relating to the suppression of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, and Haiti had ratified the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. The police and judicial authorities were also fully involved in the struggle, and the number of seizures had multiplied.

19. Aware that it alone could not overcome the drug scourge owing to the international dimensions of the problem, his Government was cooperating with the countries of the region in anti-drug operations. With help from the European Union, the country's criminal-investigation service would soon be connected with the competent authorities of other countries via a computer network and would then be able to exercise more effective maritime surveillance. However, since the problems of poverty and drug trafficking were closely linked, Haiti required external financial assistance and was relying on bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

20. His Government strongly condemned all forms of terrorism. Haiti was committed to cooperating with the international community for the total eradication of terrorism, which was a threat to international peace and security and to individual rights and freedoms, and was itself combating terrorism and impunity at the domestic level. Having in the past received aid from the United States, in that regard, his Government hoped to continue receiving help from the international community concerning the return to Haiti of terrorists who had been convicted in absentia. In order to combat crime, it was also endeavouring to construct an effective and stable system of justice; to that end, it had reactivated the *École de la magistrature* (Judicial Training College) and appointed a new minister for public security.

21. Lastly, at the international level, his delegation welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its signature by States.

22. **Mr. Dahane** (Morocco) said that, more than ever, crime and drugs represented a real threat to the entire world and were hindering the development of societies. The international community must therefore develop a common strategy to combat those problems by equipping itself with juridical instruments and cooperation mechanisms as complex as the criminal networks which were taking advantage of scientific and technical advances and exploiting loopholes in the international financial system. In that context, Morocco had in December 2000 participated in the drafting of and had signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. It was therefore incumbent on the international community to increase its technical and financial assistance to the developing countries for the purposes of implementing the Convention and promoting their sustainable economic development.

23. His Government had also signed the major conventions relating to drug trafficking, such as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Recalling that all States must cooperate and were jointly responsible for international efforts, he said that since 1996 his Government, for example, had adopted several initiatives to revise its legislation and had created a National Commission on Drugs as well as a coordinating office for the fight against drugs. It had also developed an integrated economic and social development programme for the northern provinces of the Kingdom and allocated considerable material, financial and human resources to the fight against drug-related problems in its territory. In March 2001, the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), during a visit to Morocco, had welcomed the Government's willingness to cooperate with the international community in the fight against the cultivation of cannabis. A mission from the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) had also recently visited Morocco as part of a continuing process of dialogue and consultation with its authorities.

24. **Mr. Kasemsarn** (Thailand), speaking on agenda item 111, said that despite the tireless efforts of the international community illicit drugs continued to pose a serious threat to society. He expressed concern in particular about the link between drug abuse and other problems such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, trafficking in persons, the illicit trade in small arms, money laundering and corruption and about the role of drug production and trafficking as important sources of financial support for criminal groups and transnational organized crime, including terrorist groups. The increase in the abuse of synthetic substances such as methamphetamines and Ecstasy, in particular by young people was also alarming. As a result, his Government had made the fight against narcotic drugs one of its priorities and had literally declared war on drugs.

25. Although Heads of State and Government had announced their resolve in the Millennium Declaration, concrete strategies were necessary to deal not only with issues such as supply and demand but also related areas such as alternative development, legal frameworks and law enforcement, rehabilitation and social integration of drug addicts and capacity-building. One of the most important preventive measures was alternative development, which would help combat the drug problem at its roots. Partnerships must also be built between countries, be they donors or recipients, and at all levels of society: governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, and experience and information must be shared.

26. At the regional level his Government had intensified cooperation with its neighbours in

South-East Asia, in particular China, within the framework of the Plan of Action on ASEAN-China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs. That plan involved cooperation in four major areas: increased civic awareness, demand reduction, strengthened control measures and elimination of supply by promotion of alternative development programmes and community participation. His Government had also committed itself to the ASEAN objective of working towards a drug-free region by the year 2015 and had proclaimed 2002 and 2003 the ASEAN Drugs Awareness Years.

27. His Government and the Government of Myanmar had signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals Control, according to which the two countries agreed to cooperate in areas such as drug abuse prevention, law enforcement, control of illicit crops, alternative development, treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, joint assistance programmes and exchange of information. Furthermore, it was working closely with Myanmar, Laos and China to strengthen efforts to control narcotic drugs. To that end, the four countries had held meetings at the senior official level and, subsequently, at the ministerial level.

28. In that connection, he welcomed the determination of neighbouring countries, in particular Myanmar, to cooperate in eradicating narcotic drugs and illicit drug crops and halting illicit drug flows within the next five years. He welcomed in particular the statement by the delegate from Myanmar with regard to that Government's concerted efforts to eradicate the drug problem. The Thai Government stood ready to provide assistance and share experience at the bilateral and international levels, in particular with UNDCP as it pursued its noble goal and, in that context, underscored the importance of implementing crop substitution programmes. The international community should lend its support to such regional efforts, in particular by facilitating market access for substitute crops, which was essential for the long-term success of the alternative development programme.

29. **Mr. Ling** (Belarus), speaking also on behalf of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the Russian Federation on agenda item 110, said that globalization provided particularly favourable conditions for the development of transnational organized crime, which affected a growing number of countries and was becoming a real threat to the political and socio-economic systems of entire regions. It was in that context that Belarus and the above-mentioned countries had signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was the first binding international legal instrument to be adopted in that regard. In order to ensure its rapid entry into force, however, the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP), which was responsible for ensuring implementation, must be provided with the resources necessary to fulfil its mandate, in particular with regard to promoting exchanges of information and providing technical assistance to countries as they implemented the Convention and its protocols. The technical assistance provided by the Centre for those purposes should be seen as an investment rather than as a cost. With particular reference to the fight against corruption, which was closely linked to the fight against transnational organized crime, his delegation welcomed and was fully prepared to participate in efforts to draft a United Nations convention against corruption, in the near future.

30. Fully aware that the fight against transnational organized crime must begin at the national, subregional and regional levels, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) attached great importance to the establishment of a system for cooperation between their Governments and to the adoption of measures to strengthen the enforcement of national laws in conformity with international instruments. In June 2000, they had adopted an intergovernmental programme to fight transnational organized crime for the period 2002-2003 and in March 2001 had organized an international conference on reinforcing cooperation for law enforcement in the fight against crime, international terrorism and other extreme categories of crime. Within the framework of that cooperation, in 2000 the law enforcement agencies of the CIS member States had arrested 21,000 criminals, dismantled 2,600 criminal groups and seized nearly 160,000 weapons.

31. It had become clear that international terrorism posed a particularly dangerous threat. The CIS was in the vanguard of the fight against that phenomenon thanks to the creation in December 2000 of a permanent centre for coordinating the activities of the member States' various bodies responsible for the fight against terrorism. One of the centre's priorities was to assemble a database on terrorism and on the legislative

and administrative provisions adopted by CIS member States to counteract that phenomenon.

32. The success of efforts to combat terrorism would depend on the quality of international cooperation to that end, which must be organized and supported by all.

33. **Mr. Tekin** (Turkey) said that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 had once again highlighted the increasingly close links between terrorism and organized crime. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) had been an important step forward in the fight against terrorism, because it put particular emphasis on eliminating the sources of financing of terrorism and on international cooperation. His Government had long advocated the establishment of a system of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fields of law enforcement and legal assistance. He called on Member States to work to strengthen the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP).

34. His Government would soon ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its optional protocols but would have preferred that it contain a clear reference to the relationship between terrorism and organized crime.

35. Turning to agenda item 111, he said that the multidimensional nature of the worldwide drug problem necessitated an integrated approach which took into account the underlying economic, social and political factors. Drug trafficking was also one of the major sources of financing for arms trafficking by terrorist organizations. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation between law enforcement authorities was essential and his Government had therefore expanded its training activities for other countries. In August 2000, it had inaugurated an international academy to combat drugs and organized crime within the framework of the multi-year programme implemented jointly by Turkey and the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). He was happy to note that the academy, which served as a forum for exchange of expertise and provided training facilities to the countries of the region, had already organized more than 20 regional and national training courses and meetings.

36. His Government would continue to combat money-laundering and corruption but recognized that international cooperation in that area was also essential. He therefore urged the timely completion of an international legal instrument against corruption and said the ad hoc committee should duly consider the indicative elements contained in the draft terms of reference for the negotiation of the United Nations convention against corruption.

37. Turning to the issue of trafficking in persons, an issue of particular concern to his delegation because of his country's geographical location, he said his Government was doing its utmost to combat that phenomenon but that, once again, reinforced international cooperation was necessary to address the root causes of that problem.

38. **Mr. Abdul Aziz** (Brunei Darussalam), speaking on agenda item 111, deplored the increased traffic in and abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances in his country, particularly among the younger population, in view of which Brunei was pursuing a strategy for reducing drug supply and demand. To that end, his country had enacted a number of laws punishing, inter alia, drug abuse and money laundering, and making the laundering of proceeds of drug trafficking a crime.

39. Brunei Darussalam continued to support the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session and called on the international community to cooperate in that field. In accordance with the Action Plan, it had expanded its drug-abuse prevention activities among children and young people by, for instance, education programmes that called for parent participation, and lectures and exhibitions that would reach out to all segments of society.

40. Brunei Darussalam renewed its support for the efforts of the United Nations to eliminate or reduce significantly the manufacture and marketing of and trafficking in psychotropic substances by 2008, and continued its collaboration with the other member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which had set itself the target of a drug-free region by 2015. It also unreservedly endorsed the regional action plan adopted for that purpose, especially in view of the rapid spread of synthetic drugs — in particular amphetamine-type stimulants — in the region.

41. **Mr. Ahmed** (Iraq) said that his country paid close attention to the international community's action to combat drug abuse, which posed a threat to society as a whole and to young people in particular. Given its

multiple facets, it could be overcome only by dint of international cooperation.

42. At the national level, the Iraqi Government had established a national commission to combat the abuse of alcohol and psychotropic substances; the commission enjoyed the cooperation of the country's Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health and the Interior so that Iraq could fully discharge the commitments it had made under the relevant international instruments to which it was a party, namely the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

43. That commission was an addition to a long-standing drug-control mechanism. Since Iraq's geographical location between drug-producing and drug-consuming countries could make it a transit country, it had undertaken very early on to combat drugs through legislative and regulatory measures in the field of security and health and by strengthening the drug law of 1956, which punished drug cultivation and trafficking. That was why it was one of the few countries not affected by the illicit traffic in and abuse of drugs, as abundant national, regional and international statistics attested.

44. The same could not be said of Iraqi Kurdistan, an autonomous region of the country, where the cultivation of plants used in drug manufacture was widespread and drug trafficking had increased, a state of affairs of which Iraq had apprised the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention as early as 1992. In addition, in 2000 the Iraqi law-enforcement authorities had seized 570,000 kilograms of hashish, 10,500 kilograms of opium and 1,070 kilograms of heroin. Consequently, illicit drug trafficking in that area posed a serious threat to the country's security and that of its neighbours, which had become transit countries. The Iraqi Government appealed to the international community to help put an end to that traffic.

45. **Ms. Gligorova** (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that crime, in particular in its new transnational dimensions, threatened the stability and security of all countries, whatever their level of development. Its new upsurge was all the more serious since, as shown by events in South-East Europe in the previous 10 years, international terrorism was closely linked to some types of crime (illicit traffic in arms and drugs, money laundering, etc.). The adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three protocols thereto was a major step in the fight against transnational organized crime, because it had opened a new perspective for United Nations activities and had reinforced the capacity of States to deal with the problem.

46. Her country was currently revising its legislation with a view to improving its prevention and management of certain forms of crime that were particularly rife in the region in which it was situated, and was in the process of adopting a law against corruption and a law against money laundering. It was also very much involved in the international activities against transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. It was endeavouring to develop the direct cooperation it had established on that issue with other countries, especially in the context of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe.

47. The resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session were extremely important for the international struggle against illicit drug trafficking and related problems; it was therefore crucial for the Member States of the Organization to honour the commitment they had undertaken, when adopting them, to enforce them both nationally and internationally. Her country was fully committed to cooperating with other States and with the competent international organizations to that end. It also played an active part in the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, of which it was a member, and to which, during the recent developments on its territory, it had recently furnished further proof of the close link between illicit drug trafficking and various other forms of criminal activity. In that connection, she would like the United Nations, and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in particular, to strengthen their activities in the region and, together with her country and its neighbouring countries, to better coordinate the action against illicit drug trafficking and related crimes perpetrated there.

48. **Mr. Maertens** (United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention) said that the Centre had recently published the findings of its annual survey on poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

49. With regard to the priority assigned to Africa in the Centre's activities, he assured the African delegations which had expressed concerns in that regard that the Centre had for several years been following the situation with regard to the steady increase in the number of drug addicts in Africa, the ensuing HIV/AIDS epidemic and the upsurge in the traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the region. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which was aware of the situation through the good offices of the Centre, had asked the Centre to redouble its efforts to combat drugs in Africa and draw up a strategy in that regard, in collaboration with the African countries. The strategy was being prepared and would be ready for adoption by the end of 2001. The Centre's budget proposals for the next biennium included a 117 per cent increase in appropriations for its activities in Africa and the establishment of an office for the southern African countries.

50. **Mr. Vetere** (Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention) said that 2001 had been a year of intense work for his Office, as well as for the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as evidenced by the number of projects that had been submitted to the General Assembly for its approval. An extremely complex and difficult debate had been necessary before the Commission had been able to adopt its draft resolution on plans of action to implement the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice adopted in 2000 at the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and reach agreement on the inclusion in its report of a special chapter on national and international actions to be carried out in order to fight computer-related crime.

51. With regard to the fight against terrorism, a question which concerned many Member States and to which the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had devoted a chapter of its report, he said that the Commission had for quite some time been considering what its role should be in that field, bearing in mind the tragic events of 11 September 2001. The question had been raised at its meeting of 25 September and would be considered again at its meeting in Vienna on 15 November, when it would decide whether to convene an intersessional meeting on the fight against terrorism. The Commission would surely turn to the General Assembly for guidance and financing for those activities, with a view to improving the quality of its programmes and reinforcing its capacities in the fields of technical cooperation and training.

52. Finally, he noted with satisfaction that the countries had referred to the necessity and the timeliness of expediting the process of ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three protocols thereto so as to ensure that an appropriate implementation mechanism could be set up in the near future.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.